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*The* VISION  
*of the*  
Great  
Commander



IRMA - N - WELLS

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*May the thought go forth  
from the mind of each true American  
and reader of this little book  
to unite with those across  
the sea toward ever-  
lasting Peace*





**THE VISION OF THE  
GREAT COMMANDER**



# THE VISION OF THE GREAT COMMANDER

BY

IRMA N. WELLS



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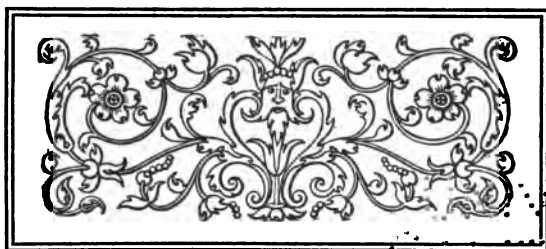
TO THE  
ALUMNAE

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*Dedicated*  
*to*  
*Mr. Woodrow Wilson*  
*who has so conscientiously and*  
*nobly met the complex*  
*problems arising in*  
*his administration*

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## THE VISION OF THE GREAT COMMANDER

**T**HE Great Commander and Ruler of People pulled his military cape more closely around his shivering body as the wind fearlessly slapped it back now and then, trying as it were to prove its power over this tall, soldierly man.

In walking along the shore of the wild and restless sea, by the defiant expression on his face, he seemed to challenge even the wind and waves to battle. Their very wildness interpreted their resentment.

Fear was unknown to this great soldier and lover of the sword. His type was one never to be forgotten. The stamp of militarism was upon him. Just



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a word of warning from his lips made every man feel to escape the soldier life was impossible. He was looked upon by one and all as the father of their nation.

Under his commanding power more soldiers were trained each year for his country. Every boy had to have his military discipline before the responsibilities of manhood were undertaken.

It was the glory and pride of this great Ruler to review the well-trained armies, and after years of this national environment, one of the strongest organized bodies of men the world had even seen, like a smoldering fire, was ready to break out and disturb the peace of the world.

Never before had the Ruler of the Nation been known to go unescorted from the Royal Palace alone at this hour of the night; he had always been accompanied by pomp and under guard. But now this was different; the message had come to him, and it seemed irresistible.

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As wild as the night was, he ventured out alone to answer the call of one he feared at last to ignore.

It was a striking picture to see this giant figure silhouetted against the evening sky. The dark cape covered his identity.

It was apparent only to the most observing and scrutinizing eye that something unusual was impelling this dark-cloaked personage as he hastened on to his destination.

He faltered on a high rocky precipice for a second.

The waves dashed in and around the rocks below.

"Peace! Peace!" were the words they sounded to his ears.

Out of the foam thousands of yearning faces looked up to him for mercy.

He pulled his helmet down over his eyes, as if to cast out the sight. He covered his ears to deafen the familiar cry that every day was increasing.

When he walked in the court of the

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Palace he heard it at every step he took.

He sought rest for his soul in the music-room, but the great organ wailed pathetically, at the end of each cadence, "Peace!"

The beautiful flowers growing so profusely in the gardens of the Royal Palace, with up-turned faces, tried to implant, as it seemed, in the soul of this great soldier the peacefulness with which they were so richly endowed.

Nature's greatest gift was also given to him, but he had ignored it. In confidence he felt his great armies could defy that greater law of Love and Peace.

A light soon appeared ahead, and he knew that he was nearing his destination. It was a light so different from others. It seemed to search his very soul. Its soft glow was fascinating. To him it suggested warmth and a welcome.

For a second the Ruler seemed to abandon his air of defiance. The relaxation softened the determined lines of his face.

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Suddenly he pulled himself together, as if to break the spell cast upon him. He tightened his hand upon his sword. As he did so the light blurred, flickered, and became so dim that he groped in the darkness.

"Why am I tormented by these peculiar fancies of late?" spoke the Ruler in a demanding tone. "Where has the light gone that gave me peace, in mind, soul, and body?"

"You are here at last," spoke a voice from out of the darkness.

"Yes; I have obeyed your call," replied the Ruler. "I cannot stay long. I must not."

"To stay or leave I will to you," spoke the voice with a sadness and gentleness so deep and great that the Ruler felt as if a great magnet was drawing him away from the human will that had held him irresistible and fearless before man.

"Who are you?" demanded the Ruler.

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"Don't you know me?" spoke the voice. "I am Conscience. I have called you many times before, but you heeded me not."

"Your ways and my ways are so vastly different," replied the Ruler. "I must leave you."

"No—See," said the voice, pointing to a near-by house. "There you shall find rest and peace for your soul. I shall show you why you must not go away."

Up to this time the Ruler could not see his companion, but as they entered the strange silent little white house, whiter than the whitest, wherein all was perfect peace and harmony, the light again blazed out, and he saw it was the light from the eyes of Conscience.

"Why did you leave me stumbling in the darkness after having lighted my pathway?" spoke the Ruler.

"The hand that loves the sword or touches it in the mad desire for rule cannot receive the light from me. I am here ready to show you how to win your

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battles by Love and Brotherly Good Will. You have the key of peace and happiness to the yearning hearts of millions. Your vast armies are naught. They are not big enough to defeat Love and Peace. Lay down your arms of steel and raise your arms of flesh in humble reach for humanity's sake."

Conscience drew nearer to the Ruler and continued:

"That would be the winning of your battles. The indemnities would come, you would not know from where, but they would enrich you so greatly that all nations would have to borrow from you. I would declare to all, for you, from the highest pinnacle, 'Your Victory' and 'My Prayer.' "

The voice of Conscience was sweet and pleading as he continued:

"Peace knows not the touch of steel. It knows only the touch of a flower. It knows not the sound of the cannon, but the song of a bird."

The Ruler was enraptured and held

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spellbound. His soul seemed to mask his face.

Conscience again drew near. Was the call heeded at last? He waited.

The peace and rest to the Ruler was such as he had not known for days.

Suddenly a tear, representing the tears of all humanity, dropped from the eye of Conscience. He saw that the human will had won.

The soul mask on the Ruler's face dropped off and the defiant look came again. His hand gripped the sword at his side.

Conscience drew back, and then, as never before, he shook with sobs.

"Oh! how long will the vanities of man last? Come with me, O Ruler, and I will show you a picture. Although my heart is breaking, I shall finish my call to you."

In silence Conscience led the Ruler into Truth's great art gallery and with reverence pulled aside the curtain of facts.

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The Ruler saw before him Nature's greatest and most beautiful picture, "Peace."

Vast fields of golden wheat were flourishing, waiting to be harvested.

Ready for the market was an orchard of rich, luscious fruit, so heavily laden that it would joyfully give up its own for relief.

The meek sheep grazing on the hillside were content to sacrifice they knew not why.

Cottages dotted the scene everywhere, with little children, laughing and gleeful, playing at their doorsteps.

Strong, manly young men were coming in from the day's toil. They were greeted by the gray-haired father and mother, who, united in love, had produced love.

All were contented. They harvested their grain, gathered their fruit, and slaughtered their lambs. They carried the best to the Palace for their Ruler.

"Should they in return receive this?"



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Look!" said Conscience, and before them was another picture.

The gray-haired father and mother were bidding farewell to their son. He was in the uniform of a soldier.

The mother gazed off at the black rolls of smoke and flashes of light in the distant battle-field. She knew her son was to be sacrificed.

Her look was steady and long as she held her boy from her. She had never harmed a hair of a human head. She was powerless to retain what God had given her the right to keep, and now she must submit to the laws of man. She would give all if necessary to bring back the peacefulness so suddenly shattered.

Surely, she thought, the guns she heard in the distance were the guns of deliverance.

The wheat-fields needed for bread were burning. The fruits were trampled upon by the on-coming soldiers. The little houses were wrecked. The chil-

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dren were crying as they paced along the dusty road with tired, blistered feet, keeping close to the older ones as they all hurried on before the approaching army.

Old men shook their heads in sorrow as they looked back upon the scene of years of toil.

The little ones were asking for the bread that could not be given, but the table of the Palace was covered with plenty.

The Ruler's face was ashen. It gave Conscience hope, as they gazed upon the scenes before them.

A young mother, exhausted, had dropped to the roadside, while her two children clung to her as they peered through the bushes toward the deafening sounds.

The eyes of the mother were wise in realization of the horrible sight beyond, but the eyes of the innocent children only stared at the big balls of fire bursting in the sky, causing

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thousands to fall from the poisonous gases that filled the air, sweet at first but bitterness to death, giving them no chance of honorable defense, choking and cutting them down in their brave effort to fight.

"You call this modern warfare?" spoke Conscience.

The eyes of the Ruler lowered, and Conscience knew that he was trembling.

In silence they turned to the next scene.

Before them now was a ship branded with a Red Cross, the sign of Hope.

Although the sea was calm, and it was far from the rocky shore, the vessel was sinking.

A friendly nation wanting to feed the hungry mouths of thousands of a sister nation, trampled through and upon, as the only pathway to reach an enemy's city, had sent the good tidings to their shore to give what their trespasser had failed to do.

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As the good ship was nearing the end of its journey, the command was given, and, without warning, a device of man was used. Gliding along under the water, it launched forth its deadly fang of poison and the long-hoped-for blessings sank to a watery grave.

"You sent again and again the command which gave to the sea that which it did not need. I have called to you each time, but you heeded me not." The eyes of Conscience were like coals of fire burning deep into the soul of the Ruler.

Before them now was the pitiful sight of sacrifice, for soldiers were returning from the battle-field, blind, deaf, and lame. They were of little use to their nation now. They could not see their loved ones or hear the voices of welcome.

The mother of five sons hastens to assist her only one returning, never to walk again, and the young mother gazes with horror as her child, looking up

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into the bandaged eyes of the father, leads him to her.

"You are asking more to take the place of the shattered," cried Conscience. "Can you longer continue these demands upon humanity?"

The Ruler, who so many times had avoided the call, was now forced to speak. He covered his face with his hands. Alone with his thoughts and the truth, his greatest battle was being fought; the flesh warring against the spirit. Would he win for all mankind the final conflict?

The memory of his well-trained armies, the huge munition works, and the many scientific devices of modern warfare, and above all the fear of the people to disobey the call to the battlefield, intensified his decision.

He knew he must be right and Conscience wrong, and he replied:

"I refuse your call! I shall continue to the end!"

He leaned heavily on his sword as he

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spoke the words slowly and deliberately to Conscience, and long did they gaze at each other.

"I shall detain you but a little longer," spoke Conscience, now almost in a whisper of despair.

"I will show you how the peace will come. The sword will be used, but behind it will be the soul of Love and Peace."

Suddenly a light outlined itself into space, and, as if the rainbow was throwing out its color, a blue appeared in the corner, and forty-eight of the choicest stars from the heavenly sky, for it had many to spare, dropped down and nestled into it. The rainbow could spare some red, too, so warm and cheerful, and it was ribboned into its place, and in between blended the white rays of purity.

"This is my last picture to you, O Ruler! It has heeded my call, and it will bring the peace and restfulness of the little white house, even for you.

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"A nation shall bleed, but it will be the blood for all mankind, and in the colors of the rainbow shall be written from end to end, 'Peace everlasting.'"

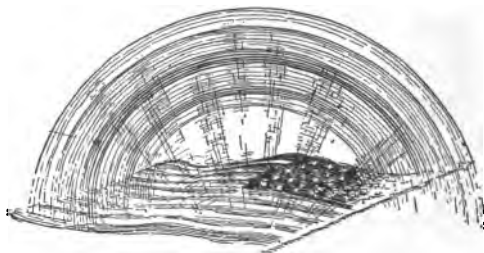
With a start the Great Ruler cried, "Come back! Come back to me, Conscience!"

But it was too late. He was gone with the answer to the Rainbow Land.

In the royal palace, the Ruler awakened from his afternoon nap. He realized his vision was only what he had in reality lived through for many days past.

His greatest fear was the Rainbow Picture.

It would linger forever like branded scars upon his soul.













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